

DECLARATION

Of the Bountiful

Loving-Kindness

OF THE

LORD,

Manifested to His Hand-maid *Mary Harris*,
 who stood idle in the Market-Place, till the
 Eleventh Hour, yet afterwards received
 her Penny. This is that none might Despair.

ALSO,

A Discovery of her Sufferings through her Disobedience
 and Rebellion against God's Precious Truth, that
 none might presume, or harden their Hearts
 in the Day of God's Visitation.

As Also,

A few Words of Encouragement from Experience, to any who
 knows the Name of the Lord in the least measure, to
 fear the Lord, and trust in his Mercies.

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A Declaration of the bountiful Loving-kindness of the Lord, manifested to one who stood idle in the Market-place till the Eleventh Hour, yet received her Penny. This is that none might despair.

Also, a discovery of her Sufferings, through her disobedience and rebellion against God's precious Truth; that none might presume or harden their Hearts in the Day of God's Visitation.

A Maid, young and beautiful, that often went with her Relations to the Meetings of the People of God, called *Quakers*, and had a love raised in her Heart to the most precious Truth, and also to them who indeed held it in a pure Conscience; yet did not give up to the Obedience of Faith, but still lived in the Customs and Fashions of this Evil World, to the wounding and stifling of the precious Life of Jesus Christ in her; but the same Love of the Lord that had begotten a tenderness in her, and raised up a love to Truth, followed her, and would not suffer her to sit down in the World without trouble; for although she was much taken notice of by them who loved vanity, and delighted in beauty more than vertue, and she by this became further off from faithfulness, yet here she must not take up her rest; for the Lord visited her with great weakness, and she grew ill, and declined, and fell into a Consumption, and lived in a consuming state about three years, outward means and medicines were used for her recovery; yet from first to last, not any thing that

was done to her, or for her, did her any good, as she often declared; but she still grew weaker and weaker; and besides this, she had such a soreness all over her poor Bones, as hath not been known in such weakness, which being taken notice of by a Friend which was nearly related to her, she said; Surely, this is more than ordinary, this is more immediately the Hand of the Lord upon thee, then is usual, this is the Judgment of the Lord upon thee for thy Disobedience; and she being in a low condition, considered the matter, and the Lord set it upon her Heart, and she cried unto the Lord for Mercy, (as she said, mightily) and it was shewed her one night, that if she did not speedily Repent, and submit to God's precious Truth, she should be smitten with Lameness from Head to Foot; then did she apply her Heart unto the Lord, and his faithful Messengers, (whose Feet are beautiful upon the Mountain of Holiness, bringing the Glad-tydings of Salvation, unto the weary and heavy laden) saying, *I have hardened my Heart at many precious Meetings when the Lord hath smitten me, and I have seen plainly the Lord would have gathered me; but I said in my Heart, if I receive this, if I give up to it, I must be a Quaker, and I cannot be a Quaker; then (said she) would I take my Heart from attending upon the Ministration of Truth, and then my Heart became more hard; What shall I do (said she) that now I may receive the Faithful sayings of the Servants of the Lord? Ah that my Heart were open, but it is shut and hard; when shall I find Mercy in this State!* She remained for some time, and grew weaker and weaker in Body; and on the first Day she took her Bed, she was much under the Righteous Judgments of the Lord, and felt his Word in her Heart as a Fire; but the Lord in Judgment remembered Mercy, and having brought her very low, he shewed her the Childs state, which she with great delight desired; and indeed she became as a little Child, fit for the Kingdom of Heaven.

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Then did the Lord rend the Vail, and shewed her his Glory, and the preciousness of his pure everlasting Truth, and the Light shined out of Darkness, and in it she saw Light, and received the Knowledge of God (whom to know is Life Eternal) and her Heart was filled with Joy, and her Mouth with Praises, and she lay for many hours without the sence of pain or weakness, sounding forth the Praises of the Lord, refusing to take any Cordials, or ought else to support the natural Spirits; saying, *I am well, I feel no pain, I am full, my Cup runs over, I am filled as with Marrow and Fatness, I have seen his Glory, and tasted of his most precious Truth, and it is sweet unto my taste; Ah, how precious, how pure, is Gods Everlasting Truth, nothing so pure, and they who indeed receive it, are made pure by it, praised be the Lord who hath made me partaker of it, and placed me amongst his People: Ah, Blessed God, who hath given me cause to sing aloud of thy praise;* then some about her, seeing her very weak, thought it might wear her too much, told her, she might praise the Lord in her Heart, and bid her try if she could sleep; but she said, she was well, and needed no sleep, *neither is my Mouth dry, said she, nor I faint;* but she was perswaded to take something, and so lay still; but after some time she said, *Surely I should not have been stopt, but I will now try if I can sleep, which she did sweetly;* and in the morning said, *Although I have slept, yet my Heart hath been exercised in the Praises of the Lord;* and that day lay very preciously, speaking to several persons as came to visit her, to their several conditions, shewing to some, who lived in pleasure, her Hands, saying, *See here, the Lord hath made these Bones bare for my rebellion, because I would not submit to his most precious Truth; he hath brought me to the dust, and I must lay down this Body as a Sacrifice; Oh, do not you stand out, it will cost you dear, if ever you find Mercy, (and such like) then would she sing Praises to*

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the Lord, and declare much concerning the purity of Truth, exhorting all, who were not made partakers of it, speedily to embrace it ; and much more he said, which will be too much to relate.

On the next day, being very weak, and it was thought she might have departed, she called for some young Persons that were related to her, and set before them their conditions, clearly, in the Light of our Lord Jesus Christ, warning and exhorting them, praying for them, blessed them in the Spirit of discerning, which the Lord gave her in the day of his Power ; and when some Friends came to her that was in the fashion of the World, she would say, *What, Friends who know Gods precious Truth, put on their Hoods so, that is like me in my other life ; Friends, who have received Gods precious Truth need no other adorning ;* and having spoken long in this wise, she laid her self in silence, waiting for her dissolution, having said, *I shall shut mine Eyes and Sleep ;* but she lay several weeks in great weakness after this, having her Heart exercised on this wise.

And if she had spoken an unadvised word, then would she cry to the Lord, to walk her throughout, and say, *Judge me, Lord, judge me, with thy great Judgments ; let nothing remain in me, or be spoken by me, but what is pure ; search me thoroughly : Ah, cursed be that nature, and that disposition ; this at first kept me from receiving Gods pure Truth, cursed be that disposition ;* and lying longer then one would have thought one so weak could have lain, taking very little of any outward sustenance ; some would say to her, it may be thou mayst recover ; *No, no,* would she say, *I must lay down this body for my rebellion ; in my other Life, if any had said, I should recover, it would for a little time seem to refresh me ; and if they had said, surely, I could not live long, (or so) it would cast me down ; but now I long for death,*

I must lay down this body; for, said she, *when I received Gods precious Truth, I received the sentence of death; And this I was very positive in all along, and when she was perswaded to be passive in this matter; she said, I have indeed cause enough to desire life now, for the Lord hath made me partaker of his blessed Truth, and if I live, I know I shall bear a Testimony, a faithful Testimony for the Lord, and he hath placed me amongst his People; and I shall have their company, this is desirable; but I must lay down this body: great was her love to the Lord and his People; and when the Servants of the Lord came to her, it was such a reviving, that she had not the sense of her weakness, her Heart being overcome with the Love of the Lord, in his Servants, she lay a rejoicing. Often was she assaulted by the Enemy, sometimes to desire Life, sometimes with worldly things, but she would say (even in Gods Authority) *Away, Satan, away, I desire thee in the Name of the Lord, touch not that which is pure;* and one time, when she was under this temptation, a precious Servant of the Lord coming to visit her; *Ah,* (said she to him) *now the Tempter flees, he cannot stand before thee;* then after she had been thus tryed, she was usually filled with joy in God, through whom she had obtained victory; then would she sound forth the praises of the Lord. And grew still more weak, and sometimes would say, *I am weak, and full of pain, but it is below me to complain;* and with much patience, and comly behaviour she lay; and in the morning before her departure, she called for several things to drink, and gasped for breath, but said, *I shall not go so.* And afterwards did, as it were, lay herself forth in silence, waiting for her dissolution; but at the coming in of a good Friend she revived, and lived till Evening, and about half an hour before her departure she was taken with a very great trembling, and seemed to be somewhat troubled, it was said by one near her; what's the matter, what ailest*

thou? I fear, said she, *whether it be a true Spirit, or a Temptation*; it was said to her, what meanest thou? art thou in any doubt as concerning the Truth of which thou art made partaker? No, no, said she, *that's Gods pure and Everlasting Truth, the Truth which the People of God, called Quakers, are made partakers of, and for which they suffer that is everlasting, that is the true Spirit, and their God is my God; and although I see it not now as I have seen it, yet I bring in my Testimony that's the Truth that shall abide for ever; that's pure, and nothing that is defiled must be belted under it; that's the Truth which enlightens every man that cometh into the World: The little Seed in me is become great, great, great; Blessed be God who hath placed me among his People, and I possess what they possess; and when the Faithful lie as I lie, my Portion will be their Portion; and my Cup is full; it runs over, over, over: Then she breathed a little thicker about the space of one quarter of an hour, and without groan or sigh, or the least motion, she shut her eyes and slept. Glory be to God for ever.*

A few Words of Encouragement from Experience, to any who know the Name of the Lord, in the least Measure, to Fear the Lord and Trust in his Mercies.

Friends,

IN the Living fence of Gods Love and manifold Mercies wherewith he hath compassed me, as on every side, it hath been often (yea, very often) upon, and in my heart, What shall I render, or wherewith shall I appear before the Lord? And the Answer was, and is, *Keep low in his Fear, and do thy Duty, declare his Goodness, spread forth his Praises, that they who have not such experience of his Mercy, may by thy Declaration, speak good of his Name, and be encouraged to fear him for ever, and trust in his Mercies.*

Then first, whosoever thou art that shalt read these Lines, and hast Hungrings and Thirstings begotten in thee after Righteousness, fear the Lord, and trust in his Mercies, and thou shalt be satisfied; let the Lord God of Heaven and Earth be thy fear, and let him be thy dread; yea, keep in the fear of the Lord all the day long, and that will purifie thy Heart, and make it a fit receptacle for the manifestation of Gods Love and Power.

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Or art thou in any doubt concerning the Truth, or the Way or Manifestation of it as it now appears ; wait thou in God's Fear, and trust in his Mercy, and assuredly the Light will shine forth, it will arise and expel the Darkness, and discover to thee the Path of Life, in which the warring man, although a Fool, shall not err.

Again, Art thou in God's Eternal Truth, poor, low and little, seeing and knowing little of the mystery of Godliness, having little faith, love or zeal for God, his Truth and People ; yet sayst thou in thy Heart, this little is of the right kind, and I would not part with it for all the World ? Well, Friend, be content with thy Portion, and keep in the pure fear of the Lord, wait on him, and trust in his Mercies, and he will arise in thee, and increase thy store ; yea, when he hath by his righteous Judgments, as with a Rod of small Cords, whipt out the Buyers and Sellers out of his Temple, and the House is clean, and thou fit for it, the time of refreshment being come, he will assuredly open the well-springs of Life in thee, and fill full thy Cup with the overflowings of his vertue, and thou shalt praise his Name even so long as thou abidest in his fear ; for the Lord is not a hard Master, but he answereth the desire of every living one ; and this my Soul knows right well, let him be glorified for ever, who hath given me the Desires of my Heart, so that I must praise his Name whilst I have a being.

But art thou now increased in Divine Substance, so that thou canst say, now the Eyes of my Understanding is enlightened, and those things which before were hard and dark as to me, are now become plain and easie, and now I see, (not men like Trees) but in the Light of the Lord I see light, not as in a glass darkly, but now I see face to face, the shadows are over and gone, and now I can say my Redeemer liveth, and the

the Eye which the Lord hath opened seeth him; yea, and he standeth last upon my Earth; the Lord my God having cast out the strong man that did keep the House, now he liveth and reigneth in me, and opens even the Flood-gates of his everlasting Loving-kindness in me; yea, he feedeth me with the Bread that cometh down from Heaven that shall never perish, and I drink and am refreshed, yea, I drink abundantly of the River of Pleasure that is at the right hand of the Father; and I drink of the Wine that is well refined new in the Kingdom of Heaven; may I not now sit down; being perfected in that Love which casteth out fear? may I not now keep holy day in God, being in a state above the fear, so much exhorted to? Ah, Friend, whosoever thou art, that shall thus say in thy heart, be not high-minded, but fear, and remember thou keep holy the Sabbath day: Art thou at rest in God, oh, sanctify the Sabbath day, and keep it holy, for this the Lord requires; and stand upon thy watch continually, and fear to the end, lest after all this thou grow careless, and the exalted spirit get up, and thou fall from thy stedfastness, and so lose thy Crown: Blessed is he who feareth always.

Further, art thou in a low estate as to things of the World, having many depending on thee, and knows not which way to turn thee, as to an outward livelihood? Ah, fear the Lord, and trust him over all, and he that feeds the Ravens, and cloathes the Lillies, that can neither sow nor spin, cast thy care upon him, and assuredly thee and thine shall be fed, *For the Earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof*; its the Lyons that shall want, and suffer hunger, *But they who fear the Lord shall want nothing that is good*; this have I seen and known, and this is writ for the encouragement, comfort and strengthening of them who are of a fearful heart; keep in God's fear, be faithful to his requirings, be not careful, but do thy duty, and Heaven and Earth shall

shall sooner pass away, then the Lord fail to supply thy necessities; yea, *He shall bless thee in thy Basket, and thy Store; he shall be with thee in thy going out, and in thy coming in, he will cause all to prosper thou settest thy hand unto:* yea, he shall bless thy Children within thee, and he shall Crown thee with his Peace, which passeth all understanding, even in thy daily labour, as thou art found waiting upon him; and he shall also replenish thy heart, and as thou keepest thy Eye and Heart to him, thou shalt be fresh and green, bringing forth fruit in thy old age, and thy last dayes shall be thy best days; and thus shall it be with them who fear the Lord, and faithfully wait upon him in a chearful diligence, expecting each day their daily Bread from the hand of the Lord, *who giveth liberally, and upbraideth not:* Oh, my Soul praise thou the Lord, (in the fence of his Love, and enjoyment of his Mercies) and let all that is within praise his holy Name, for his Mercies are manifold, and his compassion never faileth; this day is the Scripture fulfilled, and God is known indeed to be the Father to the fatherless, and the Husband to the widow; yea, the Master of that Family which calleth upon his Name hath provided all things needfully, so that it may well be said, *What lacked ye?* and he hath, yea, God himself hath recompenced, into the Bosom, even an hundred fold, whatsoever hath been given up, or lost for his sake and the Gospels; surely, surely he hath given good measure pressed down, and running over, of this I and mine are living Witnesses, and we have no cause to complain, but great cause to praise and magnifie his Name, and to live to him for ever and ever; Let all thy Works praise thee, O Lord; So, even so saith my Soul.

Mary Forster.

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